

Building the story of beekeeping through agritourism

Agritourism can provide an important financial supplement to agriculture production. CRC for Honey Bee Products researchers investigated the agritourism market to provide insights for the honey bee industry.

Agritourism conjures notions of wineries and farm stays, but the market has become increasingly diverse.

Typically, agritourism involves tourists visiting a farm or food-related business. Educational and interactive experiences are popular with visitors and can range from self-guided or farmer-led tours to overnight stays on a farm. These experiences aim to promote the production of farm produce and country life.

Agritourism presents an opportunity for the honey bee industry to raise awareness of honey and related products and build the national story of beekeeping.

The story of beekeeping is closely linked to nature and farming. A honey agritourism experience needs to be educational, interactive, and authentic, and take place in a rural environment.



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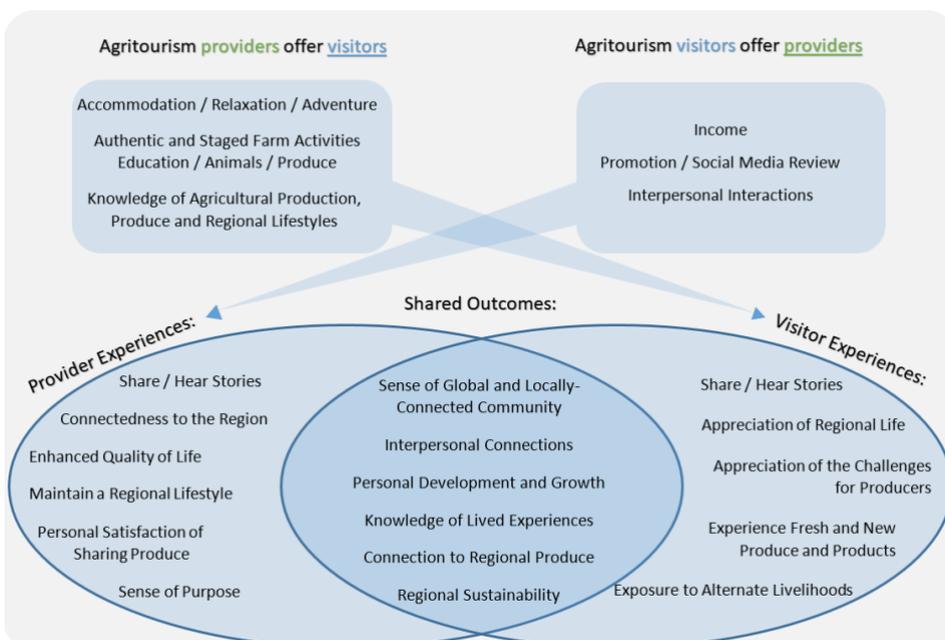
agritourism



bee-friendly



profitability



Honey agritourism offers benefits to both visitors and industry providers





CRC researchers investigated the agritourism market to gather insights for the honey bee industry. They looked at the marketing techniques used by agritourism businesses to promote themselves. Agritourism businesses use social media, and their preferred communication is through Facebook, Trip Advisor or Instagram. Niche and value-add products attract greater attraction, and once educated, offer the opportunity to sell products.

Two categories of agritourism visitors were identified. 'Non-foodies' have limited knowledge of quality produce and may look for the cheapest products. 'Foodies' are more experienced, seek the best products and will pay a premium. Additionally, consumer choice is driven by environmental issues and a desire for sustainably produced foods.

Agritourism also provides visitors access to natural spaces and the opportunity to disconnect from the stressors of day-to-day urban life.

Agritourism offers benefits to industry providers, including professional development opportunities, new skills and the ability to communicate the story of beekeeping in Australia. It also offers supplementary income and can strengthen personal connections across regional communities.

To advance agritourism in Australia, including the honey bee industry, CRC researchers recommended that all agritourism businesses be identified, certified and registered. Formalising the structure would enable knowledge sharing and collaborations between agritourism providers and clear communication of their services with the public.

The clustering of agritourism offerings within a region is a drawcard, especially when a local agritourism route is promoted. Including a honey bee product agritourism experience in each cluster would be a desirable outcome for the industry to share the Australian beekeeping story.



Honey bee farm owners Arno and Rene van Eeden offer meals and products at their West Australian farm

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